

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 1, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 2

**Introduced by Assembly Members ~~Gatto and Gatto~~, Achadjian,
and Nazarian**

***(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Ian Calderon, Garcia,
Holden, and Wilk)***

(Principal coauthors: Senators De León and Liu)

December 3, 2012

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 2—Relative to the Armenian
Genocide.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 2, as amended, Gatto. Armenian Genocide.

This measure would designate the week of April 18 to 24, 2013, as “California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923,” and would memorialize the Congress and the President of the United States to observe the California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide by participating in the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Project.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923 was the
- 2 first genocide of the 20th century, in which 1.5 million men,
- 3 women, and children lost their lives at the hands of the Turkish
- 4 Ottoman Empire in their attempt to systematically eliminate the
- 5 Armenian race; and
- 6 WHEREAS, In their 3,000 year historic homeland in Asia
- 7 Minor, Armenians were subjected to severe and unjust persecution

1 and brutality by the Turkish rulers of the Ottoman Empire before
2 and after the turn of the 20th century, including widespread acts
3 of destruction and murder during the period from 1894 to 1896,
4 inclusive, and again in 1909; and

5 WHEREAS, The massacre of the Armenians constituted one of
6 the most atrocious violations of human rights in the history of the
7 world; and

8 WHEREAS, Adolph Hitler, in persuading his army commanders
9 that the merciless persecution and killing of Jews, Poles, and other
10 people would bring no retribution, declared, “Who, after all, speaks
11 today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”; and

12 WHEREAS, Unlike other people and governments that have
13 admitted and denounced the abuses and crimes of predecessor
14 regimes, and despite the overwhelming proof of genocidal intent,
15 the Republic of Turkey has inexplicably and adamantly denied the
16 occurrence of the crimes against humanity committed by the
17 Ottoman and Young Turk rulers, and those denials compound the
18 grief of the few remaining survivors of the atrocities, desecrate
19 the memory of the victims, and cause continuing pain to the
20 descendants of the victims; and

21 WHEREAS, Leaders of nations with strategic, commercial, and
22 cultural ties to the Republic of Turkey should be reminded of their
23 duty to encourage Turkish officials to cease efforts to distort facts
24 and deny the history of events surrounding the Armenian Genocide;
25 and

26 *WHEREAS, The determination of those who continue to speak*
27 *the truth about the Armenian Genocide is tested to this day with*
28 *some of these speakers of truth being silenced by violent means;*
29 *and*

30 WHEREAS, The accelerated level and scope of denial and
31 revisionism, coupled with the passage of time and the fact that
32 very few survivors remain who can serve as reminders of
33 indescribable brutality and tormented lives, compel a sense of
34 urgency in efforts to solidify recognition of historical truth; and

35 WHEREAS, By consistently remembering and forcefully
36 condemning the atrocities committed against the Armenians, and
37 honoring the survivors as well as other victims of similar heinous
38 conduct, we guard against repetition of such acts of genocide and
39 provide the American public with a greater understanding of its
40 heritage; and

1 WHEREAS, This measure would provide that the Legislature
2 deploras the persistent, ongoing efforts by any person in this
3 country or abroad to deny the historical fact of the Armenian
4 Genocide; and

5 WHEREAS, California is home to the largest
6 Armenian-American population in the United States, and
7 Armenians living in California have enriched our state through
8 their leadership in business, agriculture, academia, government,
9 and the arts; and

10 WHEREAS, The State of California has been at the forefront
11 of encouraging and promoting a curriculum relating to human
12 rights and genocide in order to empower future generations to
13 prevent recurrence of the crime of genocide; now, therefore, be it

14 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
15 *California, jointly,* That the State of California commends its
16 conscientious educators who teach about human rights and
17 genocide; and be it further

18 *Resolved,* That the Legislature of the State of California hereby
19 designates the week of April 18 to 24, 2013, as “California Week
20 of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923”; and
21 be it further

22 *Resolved,* That California commemorates California Week of
23 Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide through the Armenian
24 Genocide Commemorative Project; and be it further

25 *Resolved,* That the State of California respectfully calls upon
26 the Congress and the President of the United States to act likewise
27 and to formally and consistently recognize and reaffirm the
28 historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian
29 people constituted genocide; and be it further

30 *Resolved,* That the Legislature calls upon the Republic of Turkey
31 to acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide and to work
32 toward a just resolution; and be it further

33 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
34 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
35 States, Members of the United States Congress, the Governor, and
36 the Turkish Ambassador to the United States.